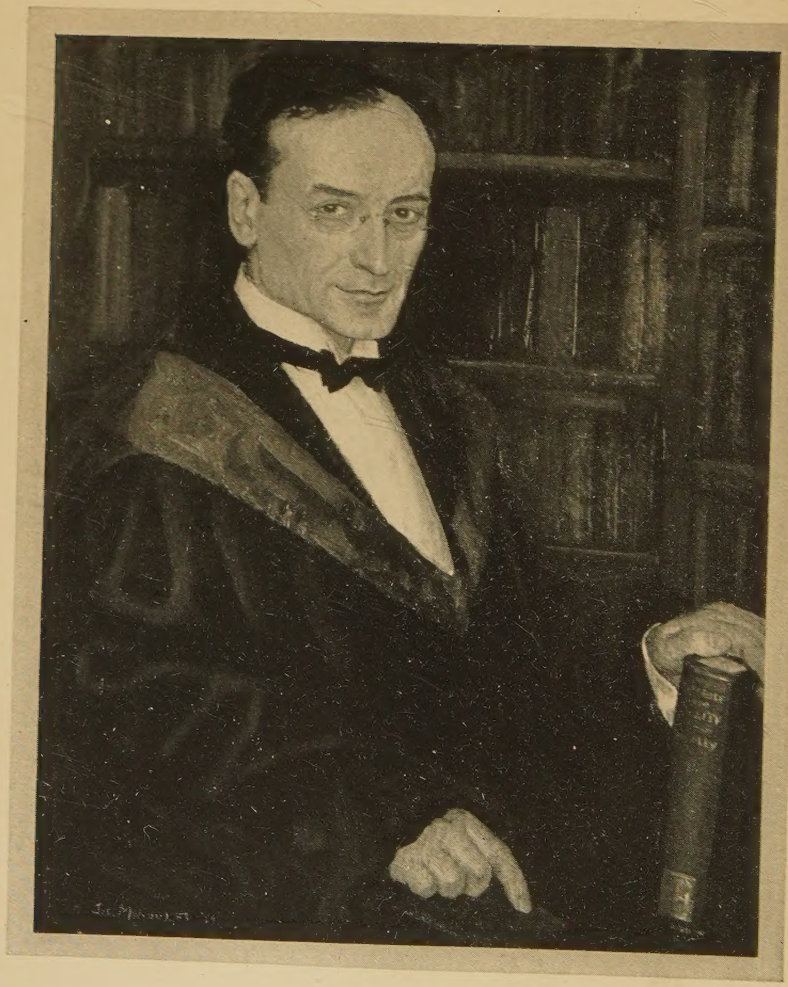
MORRIS RAPHAEL COHEN



A TRIBUTE

TO PROFESSOR

MORRIS RAPHAEL COHEN

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"THE YOUTH WHO SAT AT HIS FEET"

NEW YORK MCMXXVIII

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(1901-1927)

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INTRODUCTION AND DEDICATION

On October 15, 1927, more than a thousand people gathered at the Hotel Astor to do honor to Professor Morris Raphael Cohen, who had completed a quarter century of teaching in Mathematics and in Philosophy at the College of the City of New York. Students, colleagues and friends came and created a unique festival.

It was suggested by Dr. Felix Adler that an attempt be made to capture in the written word the spirit of the evening and that a transcript of the addresses be printed, so that this tribute to a teacher —and memorable because it was to a teacher—be more lasting in the memory, and that those who were not present may catch some breath of the loveliness of the occasion. With that thought in view, this little volume was printed.

While philosophy and the teaching of philosophy were the themes of the evening, the medium was that of poesy and drama, and it is so that we wish to set the stage:

A host of faces. A brilliant assembly. If it were

possible for a stage director to light up the faces of people with intellectual eagerness and consecration, such would be the setting. Here was a group of friends with the name of Thomas Davidson upon their lips, here a group reminiscing of classes at the Educational Alliance. Right close was a table of brilliant young philosophy teachers of Columbia University, there a venerated name of an anthropologist, a sculptor, a judge. Grouped here were distinguished teachers from various universities, leaders of ethical societies and seminaries, jurists, and scientists; and everywhere—classmates, colleagues and students of Professor Cohen, honoring him and honoring the College of the City of New York that gave rich opportunity for study and scholarship.

At the right of the dais, strangely out of place, yet so intrinsically part of this tribute, sat the father and mother of Professor Cohen, speaking a different language, living in a different world, looking at this gathering with eyes eighty years old, eyes misty with love and pride, spanning the years of Yiddish Ghettos of tragedy and despair. They looked strangely bewildered at this son who was theirs, begotten and nurtured by them, but who had travelled into lands foreign and yet universal.

What was it in the man that was being honored? What was it in the circumstances that created fervor? Here in New York City, the busy hive of practical industry, buzzing with the continual hunger for more satisfaction of desire, where the king of industry is the king of men and the political statesman is honored in the market place, where religion builds its temples on the Stock Exchange, men and women came to honor a scholar hidden among his books, living simply and seeking no utility in his quiet research. In struggle and frustration he kept true to an inner light of reason and by that power born to a lover of Truth, he gathered young men about him and kindled many hearts and minds. That evening the philosopher-teacher was king!

It has been my privilege to be a student of Professor Cohen. Method or content in teaching is frequently only a vehicle to the personality of the teacher communicating itself to the students. It is particularly true in Professor Cohen's case. His class room may be likened to a laboratory where ideas are tested for rational validity. There are no airy vaporings. There is no false stimulus of inspirational talk, that by its quick disappearance leaves a void begetting only disillusionment. It is true that more

frequently the tests dissolved myths—and woe is me—frequently a "Weltanschauung" built meticulously in adolescence crumbled. In the beginning, I was conscious of an acidic wit that not only dissolved but bit too sharply, that destroyed and did not energize recreation. But soon there came the realization of the profound earnestness of this seeker for genuine ideas. One forgave the surgeon's sharp knife for the healing process thereafter. One understood the curative x-ray that pierced to the wound. A keen logic sought the foundation of ethics and law, of science and philosophy, but it was not a sterile logic. It became fruitful through the penetration of the one mysticism that logic readily accepts as its love—a faith in its power to reveal truth. Logic is then productive of harmonies that are as æsthetically satisfying as is sweet music.

Professor Cohen in his address explained his task as an attempt "to relieve the student of needless traditional baggage" and while he leaves him in the desert, he has at least taken him "out of the Egypt of Bondage." Let not the statement create an impression of an atmosphere of desert and whirling sand. I felt when I came into the class room that I came to a crystal clear spring where the waters were cold

and refreshing. The "climate of opinion" and the "temperature of ideas" were not suitable for passionate prejudices and half-baked theories. A long cool draught at the fountain head cleared the mind of cobwebs and musty ideas.

We do not always seek rational answers to the perplexing problems of life. The pitiless forces of circumstance frequently tire our weary minds and hearts and throw us into a religious solitariness that yearns for a revelation beyond mortal logic. But we dare not find solace in beautifully wrought systems of philosophy when, at the foundation source, assumptions are laid for corner stones that are inherently false and crumbling. Living ideas are crystallized into dead forms. Rather a twig here and a branch there, with a seed somewhere to grow into scientific philosophies. These are the methods and the seemingly destructive probings in Professor Cohen's courses on Ethics and Logic, in Philosophy of Science, of Law, of Civilization.

There is a consciousness among Professor Cohen's students of belonging to a favored experience. A bond unites us as a beloved community of the Students of Professor Cohen. We shall wander in many fields and by-paths, but there will always be a clear

call for truth and tolerance. We can not help but breathe a simplicity and candor that is of the essence of our teacher Morris Cohen.

One word more and that in dedication. In a congratulatory letter, Dr. John L. Elliott wrote, "I do not know when I have attended anything that gave me more courage and satisfaction than the Cohen Dinner." *Courage!* It sounded strange coming from a brave ethics teacher, and for more than thirty years, Headworker at the Hudson Guild, among the Irish! Courage—but that was the same word used by Professor Cohen in agreeing to be publicly honored and thus serve as testimony to others. He felt that there were many able teachers; this tribute might give them courage, knowing that there is a responsive appreciation.

Our educational institutions have become dangerously regimented. Our liberals have became weary. There is enough call for loyalty, but little for loyalty to the precious traditions of freedom and tolerance. Teachers are hesitant to guide youth in independent search for truth. Those that make the effort are unhappy because they are lonely. It is to them we call "Courage!" The pattern of this tribute to Professor Cohen we thus wish to multiply and enrich a

thousandfold. We dedicate this volume to teachers everywhere who in unostentatious ways are kindling flames in the hearts and minds of their pupils, zealous but for one thing (the crown of great teachers, more frequently the crown of thorns), a critical truth and the freedom to seek it.

May we emphasize this dedication with the words of Professor Dewey. All of us who honor Professor Cohen do so "because we feel that in writing ourselves down his friend, we are in some measure also identifying ourselves with the friends of truth, the friends of freedom, the friends of that freedom which is both the parent and the progeny of truth, the friends of that truth which alone makes humanity free."

MAX GROSSMAN '16

1902–1927

TESTIMONIAL DINNER

given by

Students and Friends

to

PROFESSOR MORRIS RAPHAEL COHEN

Professor of Philosophy

at the

COLLEGE OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Saturday, October 15, 1927

HOTEL ASTOR, NEW YORK CITY

MAX GROSSMAN

IT is a great honor to welcome you all at this happy gathering testifying to our love and respect for Professor Morris R. Cohen. A telegram from the Student Body will most appropriately open the ceremonies.

"Students of the College of the City of New York send their congratulations on the completion twenty-five years of service to the student body."

STUDENT COUNCIL

We beg to change the procedure of the formal program and call upon a former student to give you words of welcome and also to introduce the Toastmaster for the evening.

Nathan R. Margold of the class of 1919 has served with high distinction in the Federal District Attorney's office and is now Professor Margold at the Harvard Law School. He thus makes a fine liaison officer between Professor Cohen, his teacher,

and Professor Frankfurter, his colleague. I take great pleasure in introducing Professor Nathan R. Margold.

Professor Nathan R. Margold

Mr. Grossman, Professor Cohen, Ladies and Gentlemen: It is my happy privilege on behalf of the former students of Professor Cohen, who are tendering him this dinner tonight, to extend to you all our most cordial welcome. There are others more able and worthy than I, outstanding in the philosophical, juridical and educational fields of our day and indeed of all time, who soon will address you, and will express appreciation of Professor Cohen's merit as a scholar and of his contributions to science, law, philosophy and education; but I doubt whether there is any one here tonight who owes Professor Cohen a greater personal debt than I, or any one here who could be happier or who could be as happy at the opportunity to say even a few words in grateful acknowledgment and appreciation.

Of course, I am but one of a great many who have received their first impulse towards scholarship through their contact with Professor Cohen; but

therein lies the importance of the service which Professor Cohen has performed as a teacher. During his twenty-five years at City College he has trained thousands of students in the fundamentals of scientific, logical thinking. Those who have turned to the legal profession, like myself, owe him a special debt of gratitude for the training they received in habitual modes of reasoning which are peculiarly helpful in the solution of legal problems.

In my own class at the Havard Law School there were two graduates of City College who had done rather indifferently in the college generally, but better in Professor Cohen's courses, and whose association with him gave them a tremendous advantage over their classmates at the Law School. They, I know, trace their outstanding success in the law, both in school and in practice, to Professor Cohen's early influence in shaping their mental habits.

What is true of them is true of many, many others —if not at the Harvard Law School then at other schools; if not in the law then in other professions and occupations. In every walk of life they have carried with them the benefit of their training in his classes, enjoying it themselves and spreading the effect of it to others. For this service of incalculable

value we here render tribute; and I know that I express the sentiment of all of Professor Cohen's students, whether present here tonight or not, when I wish him continued success and hope that this dinner will be only one of several quarter-century dinners which we and his students in the future will have the privilege of tendering in his honor.

My task tonight is doubly pleasant, for it embraces the duty of introducing our Toastmaster, who, at law school, carried on for me the intellectual training which Professor Cohen had begun. Professor Frankfurter has too long and too ably busied himself in behalf of public legal movements and in the aid of those especially oppressed by miscarriages of justice to need introduction anywhere, and it is not in that capacity that I wish to introduce him tonight; nor is it in the capacity of the great legal scholar and teacher that he undoubtedly is. Rather let us identify ourselves with his greatness; let us greet him as one of us, a product of our college and student-friend and roommate of our beloved Professor Cohen. As such, ladies and gentlemen, I take great pleasure in introducing to you my master, colleague and friend, Felix Frankfurter.

THE TOASTMASTER

THOSE who guide the destinies of this dinner must explain to you why a mere lawyer should have the chair on such a philosophic occasion, but inasmuch as nothing irrational is alien to a philosopher, at least Morris Cohen will not demur to the selection.

An otherwise discerning woman, one of those multitudinous admirers of the guest, asked me, "Why this dinner? Why a dinner for Morris Cohen?" I hope she is here to have the question face her in all its stark irrelevance. But the question was put so challengingly that I had to think for an answer, and if there is one thing that I suppose we owe to Morris Cohen it is candor, so, if I am compelled to give answer I should say we are here tonight to celebrate the achievements of a useless life.

For Cohen has not decreased costs; he has not increased production; he has not eliminated waste—aye, he has not even written a best seller. He has given his life to contemplation, and to an extraordinary measure he has stirred the taste and the talent for contemplation in others. He has asked for the meaning of things and he has led us in all our diverse

ways to ask the meanings of our callings, and professions and activities.

And so, in good truth, measured by the ordinary criteria, his is a useless life—the most useful of all possible lives.

Dinners, like every other form of human manifestation, are both for weal and for woe; they are abused and used. But seldom are they used so significantly as your presence here tonight testifies. I am merely, as it were, the showman, the Balieff of a Chauve-Souris. In addition my task is to be timekeeper. I am admonished to convey with sweet persuasiveness that time, at least tonight, is finite. I am also admonished to remind the speakers who are to follow of a rather canny injunction of the Talmud, when it suggests that at funerals,—the reference is not a happy one,—when it suggests that the orators at funerals should bear in mind that there is a judgment day not only for the deceased but also for the orators. However, it is Morris Cohen's proud boast to believe that he does not rank modesty high in the hierarchy of virtues. I think his boast will be put to the test tonight.

I shall ask him who was, as it were, the promoter, the begetter of Cohen, the philosopher, to tell us

what he has to say of his offspring. It is Dean Woodbridge who started Morris Cohen off on his useless career, and it is, thanks to Dean Woodbridge's "Journal," that I suppose some of the most important utterances of Professor Cohen have been given to the world. I say "given to the world." It is an awfully narrow and meager world that the "Journal" administers to.

An English philosophic friend of mine, who had to come to America to discover the "Journal," said —I do not know whether he is right, Mr. Russell? —"There isn't a copy of the 'Journal' at Oxford." Perhaps there is one at Cambridge. At all events, he thought that the "Journal" was a cemetery of buried talent. Dean Woodbridge, possibly not without design, has not made the "Journal" a best seller. If it were a best seller it couldn't be a depository of best minds. Dean Woodbridge.

Dean Frederick J. E. Woodbridge

Mr. Toastmaster, my one-time pupil, friends and admirers of our much loved guest: There is an old Latin adage which warns us that of the dead we should say only what is good. I suppose that we may

naturally infer from this that of the living we may say what we please, but there is, I fear, a still more subtle implication involved in the old adage, which may however require very little wit to discover, namely, that if too much good is said of the living, the implication as to his living status may not be wholly complimentary.

It is so natural to speak only good of Professor Cohen that I very much hope that someone before the evening is over will speak much evil of him, in order that he may not be ushered too speedily into immortality. I might have taken this task upon myself, for I have known Professor Cohen as a student, and teachers can very well say something else than what is good of their students.

Unfortunately, however, I have to confess that Cohen was a good student. He pays me from time to time a very affectionate compliment, which I gladly receive in the spirit in which it is given, but which my sober judgment warns me that I ought to put aside. He frequently speaks of me as his teacher, but, although I have addressed him at the beginning of what I have to say tonight as my one-time pupil, I can never think of him as a pupil of mine. I think of him rather as a fellow student. He and I, so to

speak, entered Columbia University together. It was, if I remember rightly, my first year there and it was his first year there. We started out, consequently, upon a joint enterprise. I say he was a good student, but it is not as a good student that I remember him. It is rather the atmosphere which he with others did so much to create in those early years, the intellectual temper which he brought to what we were doing.

In my experience I have come to distinguish between two types of students of philosophy, those who love ideas and those who are anxious about them. There is a great deal of difference there. The ideas, no matter how crazy they may seem to some of us, which have often stirred human minds, are to some philosophers interesting on their own account. They may care very little about what those ideas amount to, whether they are true or whether they are false; they love the ideas because they are in some shape or other expressions of the human mind or of human feelings.

I may illustrate this by one of the pitiful experiences from my own career. A few years ago, stimulated largely by the writings of Henry Adams, I became very much interested in the Blessed Virgin. I

spent considerable time studying her. I was very much impressed by a remark of Henry Adams that she had been a force, and so I prepared three lectures as a result of my study. I wanted very much to develop this idea of a force and when I got through I was very proud of my lectures. I thought I had done something very splendid and very significant and I was naturally curious to know what effect I had produced upon the class. Although I have a good deal of egotism and vanity, I disliked asking openly about the result, so I resorted to devious methods and instituted a rather clandestine inquiry as to the effect I had produced on the class. I said I thought the lectures were splendid, but the report I got back was that I had aroused a violent discussion in the class as to whether I was a Roman Catholic or not.

My students seemed to be anxious about ideas and especially anxious about my own. Professor Cohen was not a student of that kind. We have gotten the habit of listening to what he has to say, whether we agree with him or not, because we are pretty sure that what he has to say is reflected against the background of competent knowledge in the field about which he is talking.

I may illustrate the contrast by another experience

of a young economist who appeared before our department for his preliminary examination for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. He was asked by a competent economist, whose name I would dearly love to utter but will refrain, certain questions about some bygone theories in economics. This young student was a very brilliant fellow, much valued by his teachers, and he replied, "I don't take any stock in those theories." The examiner replied, "Neither do I, but I expect you to know what it is in which you take no stock."

Professor Cohen was from the beginning of my knowledge of him a student who always knew what it was in which he took no stock. It was this atmosphere which he so largely helped in creating, the atmosphere of love of ideas rather than anxiety about them, which I remember and which makes it impossible for me to associate him in my memory as a student of mine; I should rather be known as a student of his.

The Toastmaster

I am sure Professor Cohen and the rest of us miss one presence tonight particularly, the presence of Dr. Felix Adler, who had so large a share in the

early disputatious years of Cohen's philosophic apprenticeship. Dr. Elliott will be good enough to read to us a few words that Dr. Adler has sent in his absence.

DR. ELLIOTT

I HAVE the pleasure of reading this letter from Dr. Adler, who wanted very much to come.

DEAR MR. GROSSMAN:

My obligations on Saturday next are of such a nature as to make it impossible for me to attend the dinner which you and others are tendering to Professor Cohen. But I wish to be at least represented by this written message.

There is a certain mood in which one is tempted to chant the virtue of "no banquets," no chorus of praise, *no epitaphy* (pardon the pun), in the presence of a man still living; instead, suffering him to proceed on his noble way unmolested by our superfluous eulogies.

For after all Morris Cohen is in the best sense a self-made man. Self-reliance in the Emersonian signification has been his keynote. He has risen from lesser to higher levels by dint of sheer merit. If

he has arrived, it is due to an intelligence exceptionally firm while delicate in its touch, to an unquenchable thirst for wisdom, and to a character marked out by sterling integrity, dignity and independence.

And self-reliance is admirable. No one who has ever amounted to anything in the world has asked leave of others to become what it was in his nature to become and be. *Nevertheless*, there is a difference between relying on others in the sense of leaning on others, and on the other hand welcoming the judgment of others in the *appraisement* of what one is in the way of becoming. And this kind of appraisement is especially welcome at three periods of a man's career —at the beginning, at the end, and in the middle. In youth, when there is just the promise and as yet no performance, the friendly eye of an older man who has the insight to detect the hidden promise is a boon of infinite value. In the middle of a man's career, when the curve of life is approaching the zenith, when the promise has unfolded, when valid performance is in evidence, then the discriminating assessments of friendly onlookers is worth having for the encouragement it gives toward still larger performance. And at the end of the career some consensus of the competent shall strike the balance of

the man's life, and assign to him the place that belongs to him.

On this Saturday evening you are performing the second of the two functions I have mentioned, you are gathering around him as he stands midway—on the day, so to speak, of his silver wedding with philosophy, bidding him cheer and good speed on his way. I join with you heartily and express my own wishes for him in the students' salutation: "Vivat—crescat—floreat!" May he have length of life; may he continue to grow into the fuller stature of his personality, and may he have the happiness of throwing into the soil of other minds seeds of thought like his own which will flourish there in flower and fruit unlike his own.

Yours sincerely,
FELIX ADLER

THE TOASTMASTER

To a mere layman, philosophy seems to be an adventure that never makes port and therefore there are many routes and many pilots to the unattainable shores. The agreements *en route* between Professor Cohen and Professor Dewey make their divergences

all the more teasing. If a pluralistic universe like philosophy can have a single head, then, surely, if not its head, then at the head stands Professor Dewey.

Professor John Dewey

Friends, it is perhaps natural on an occasion when we are commemorating—I will not say twenty-five years of history but twenty-five years of life—that our minds should be led backward, and so my mind has been running, as I sat here, into past years. I am perhaps older not merely than our guest, our honored guest, but than most of my colleagues here. So I have been led to recall, without derogation to the credit which my colleague, Mr. Woodbridge, has in bringing up Morris Cohen or that which belongs to Felix Adler, certain of his other early teachers: Josiah Royce, William James of Harvard, and that academic outlaw, Thomas Davidson.

I have been led to think of this living stream, into the current of which Morris Cohen was taken up, of which he became a part and which through him has passed on into the lives of so many others of us. I think not merely of these individuals, these per-

sonalities who cannot be present in the body but are certainly now present in the mind and spirit, not merely of Morris Cohen and some of the rest of us, but of all who have in any way come under his intellectual influence. I think also of the multitude of others in the past who have entered into his life and through his into the lives of those who are meeting here tonight, and into those of the countless other students of his who are not able to be here: of the scholars, rabbis, learned men of Russia and of the Orient. Perhaps, I, as an old man, am going too far back into the past, but it seems to me that the great significance of an occasion like this is that we may realize how real and how continuous are the influences which hold the intellectual and moral life of men together. These people, many of them from far lands and strange countries, have become in ways that none of us can realize—we do not even know the names of many of them—are even now a vital influence because of the candor, the intellectual energy, vigor and independence of a man like Morris Cohen.

If I were speaking of some persons I might seem in this emphasis upon the past to be derogating some-

what from Cohen's intellectual independence, but you all know him too well to give any such interpretation to my remarks.

It is not only that men like Josiah Royce, William James and Thomas Davidson, to mention only those who have gone, were themselves men of independence, who stood upon their own intellectual feet, men of very diverse views,—that they were, as the old New England phrase had it, not only men of character, but they were themselves characters, and so could not turn out any mere echo or phonographic repetition of their own views,—but that Morris Cohen has so amply demonstrated his own intellectual independence. In fact, I might almost say that the only thing I have against him is his undue fear lest somebody else agree with him.

It seems to me sometimes a little morbid; in another person almost inhuman. It is a wonderful thing that a person who is so thoroughly a democrat, and so thoroughly a believer in democracy, can have such a tremendous respect for minorities as Morris Cohen has. On the whole, the smaller the minority the more favor it is looked upon by him. It is his candor, straightforwardness, his critical love of truth,

as well as of scholarship, that we honor in him this evening. And because of this the stream of the past which is passing through him is a living stream. The thousands of pupils whom he has taught, so many of whom are here tonight to do him honor, so many of whom would gladly be here, have come here to participate in that spirit of candor, of straightforwardness, of honesty, without pretentious parade, which has marked his life.

Wherever there has been any oppression, there the oppressed have found a friend in Morris Cohen. Wherever there have been elements that were unpopular merely for some conventional reason, they have found a friend and a sympathizer in him. I am sure that consciously or unconsciously all of us, who have come here to do him honor this evening, have done it not merely from personal affection and from loyalty to a friend, but because we feel that in writing ourselves down his friend, we are in some measure also identifying ourselves with the friends of truth, the friends of freedom, the friends of that freedom which is both the parent and the progeny of truth, the friends of that truth which alone makes humanity free.

THE TOASTMASTER

IT is a wise university president who knows whence to get wisdom. Unfortunately that combination of poet and pedestrian who first presided over the College of the City of New York when Cohen came to teach there, is not with us in person. It is not for nothing that John H. Finley is a poet and pedestrian. And so, in his pedestrian way, he had the poetic insight to ask Royce and James and George Herbert Palmer what they thought of Morris Cohen when he got through with his doctorate at Harvard, and they told him. I wouldn't dare tell you some of the things I could quote of what they said because it would transcend even Morris Cohen's appetite for the truth. Nevertheless, I have asked Dean Brownson former Dean Brownson—he still is my own Professor of Greek Brownson—to read a letter from Dr. Finley.

October 15, 1927

DEAR PROFESSOR MORRIS COHEN:

I fully expected to be a guest at your great feast tonight with those who wish to show you gratitude

and honor. But I find, at almost the last hour, that I cannot. I am mightily disappointed and for two reasons. I wished to add my personal word of appreciation and praise (and my past-perfect official word) to what others might say. I wished also (and this is properly denied me) to turn a little of the credit for your distinguished career to my own account. However, I deserve no credit for doing what I thought was for the good of the College, which we both love. I am bound to say that I had some hesitation when you, who had been a tutor or instructor in mathematics, were proposed for a position in philosophy. But I remember to this day the letters about you from *William James* and *Josiah Royce* and others and that after seeing them I had no question as to your fitness in philosophy (or anything else). I wish that these letters might be recovered (as I have in vain tried to do to-day) and put of record in the minutes of this meeting. I have often said that I have never read higher commendation of any student from such high authority. You have fulfilled the promise of these great prophets. What more can I say except that you have put yourself by your merit in the class with the man of your own race, Mordecai, whom King Ahasuerus delighted to

honor? As the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad over his recognition, so this city, whose son you are, is proud of you and glad of this recognition of your worth and your service.

Sincerely yours,
JOHN H. FINLEY

THE TOASTMASTER

GOOD fortune brings to our midst at this time a fledgling university president. He is still too recent a university president to be inured in bad habits. Give him time, and he may run the common lot. Dr. Magnes.

DR. JUDAH L. MAGNES

IN days gone by when some of those minorities that Professor Dewey spoke of contained among others both Professor Cohen and myself, Professor Cohen was wont to reveal to me some of the secrets of that mystic philosophic profession of which he is so notable an adornment. He told me that once he had been invited by the Menorah Society of the City College to deliver a lecture on the Jewish problem.

There was a large gathering of eager youth to hear Professor Cohen, and—lo and behold—at last a Jewish subject. And when all had gathered together, Professor Cohen proceeded to apply his famous pedagogic method of shock. After being introduced he said, "I have been asked to speak on the Jewish problem. Gentlemen, there is no Jewish problem" —and thereupon he sat down.

After great consternation and shuffling to and fro and whispering between the awe-stricken Chairman and other members of the committee, Professer Cohen, in the goodness of his heart, rose again and proceeded to explain why there was no Jewish problem, and he thereupon delivered himself of certain conceptions about the Jews, which, so I was informed, proved to others that not only was there a Jewish problem but that Professor Cohen knew all about it before he had begun.

Now whether or not there be a Jewish problem, I venture to say that you will agree with me that this pedagogic method of shock in relation to such a problem could have been devised only by a Jewish mind, and whether or not there be a Jewish problem I think perhaps that Professor Cohen will agree that

there has been and that there perhaps is some such thing as Jewish mind that has coursed through him and that courses through his students, sometimes even unbeknown to the Professor himself.

I do not know what his views as to the new Hebrew University of Jerusalem may be. Perhaps he would say, applying his method of shock, there is no Hebrew University, and perhaps I might agree with him. At any rate, there is a Hebrew University in essence and in embryo, and it would be a great honor to the Hebrew University if Professor Cohen were to consent to come to us and explain to us something about the Hebraic spirit which also courses through him in his passionate love of righteousness and of justice, that Hebraic spirit of which the Hebrew prophets were great proponents and of whom Professor Cohen is a worthy child.

The Hebrew University wants, if it can, to bring about a concentration of Jewish mind, of Jewish philosophic insight, and it hopes that every one who comes there on its teaching staff, be he this or that, may at least be a philosopher or philosophizer. In the course of time it may perhaps be given to the Hebrew University to make a new contribution to human

knowledge, to lend some color to the meaning of reality, to give something of value to those who are searching after philosophic truth.

Professor Cohen, Jerusalem is a place for contemplation. It is near the desert and one can go out into the desert and be all alone and contradict all the world without fear of being contradicted. We would welcome you there in order that you and we together might make our contribution to knowledge, so that knowledge might fill the earth, so that the intellectual love of God might penetrate the hearts, even as the waters cover the sea.

The Toastmaster

Philosophy once held sway over the mind, and once upon a time things were studied in their relation. But the feverish and meticulous specialization of learning in the 19th century begot mutilation of mind because of the jealous rivalry, the exclusiveness among studies that were after all merely differentiations often for pedagogic reasons, due to the necessities of work, considering that there were only twenty-four hours in a day. The significant thing about my profession—and it seems to be, from the glimpses one catches, true of other professions—is

that this mutilation of mind has brought its own defeat, and, happily, philosophy is again beginning to hold sway in the effort to see things in their relation. The sterility of our law until fairly recent days, but for the extraordinary, prophetic writings of Mr. Justice Holmes, is amply attested in decisions about which I dare say Mr. Louis Marshall and I would not agree. At all events, the fact is that Mr. Marshall is here tonight to bear testimony to the claims of philosophy, and you couldn't have gotten a leader of the bar to attend a banquet to a mere philosopher thirty years ago or even twenty years ago. The importance of Morris Cohen's contribution—and one names him as a symbol tonight because after all this is his party, if I were to talk out of school I should say it is Mrs. Cohen's party—the significance of Morris Cohen is in making us all realize that we are but parts of a larger whole, an illimitable whole. To that end you will forgive me if I commit the fatal sin, for a toastmaster, of reading. But, unfortunately, a distinguished scientist who was to have been here tonight was called away by the death of a very close friend, and so I must read what Dr. Alfred Cohn of the Rockefeller Institute writes, speaking as a medical scientist:

Dear Professor Cohen:

Not coming to the great dinner tomorrow night is a source of great disappointment to me. I had been looking forward to the occasion with much eagerness, especially because there were one or two things I wished to say. But I'm on my way to Boston to pay a last tribute to an old and dear friend.

I don't want to let this opportunity pass, however, of acknowledging with much pleasure a debt I owe you. You are not unaware of a sort of distrust, people in my generation grew up in, of the importance of philosophical studies. That is of course passing away—people cannot long refrain from asking what their callings mean. And you were instrumental in bringing home to me precisely that acquaintance. That year at the New School helped me signally to an appreciation of the relation of philosophy to science which had scarcely been as clear to me before.

I shall expect to hear how successful the evening will have been and of all the well deserved things that will have been said. It's a lasting regret that I shall be unable to say my say.

Sincerely,

Alfred Cohn

Well, if that is the testimony of a mind so curious and so sensitive and, in the judgment of some of his colleagues, so dangerously philosophic, what must be the state of African ignorance of the rest of the scientific world? Let me avouch a witness from my own territory. Dean Pound asked me to bring his personal greetings to Professor Cohen and to read a few words of his.

"TWENTY years ago the late Lord Bryce, speaking before the American Bar Association, deprecated a growing interest on the part of American lawyers in philosophy of law. Indeed, the orthodox Anglo-American legal science of the last generation would not hear of philosophy. Our law schools have always been professional schools, and the professional bent of our law schools has caused them to reflect a characteristic attitude of the legal profession in English-speaking countries. Adjudication and legislation were purely practical activities. Hence, as with other purely practical activities, the Anglo-Saxon point of view has been that no special training or preparation or competency was called for. In the last century we had like ideas as to the practical activity of admin-

istration. We conceived that any honest citizen could do the work of administration. He qualified himself for administration by the apprenticeship of holding public office. He learned to administer by administering. This served well enough in the rural, agricultural society of the last century. Administrative problems were few and simple, and as a rule called for little or no technical capacity. So it was, too, with adjudication. Until the middle of the last century judges were largely laymen. Later, one qualified to be a lawyer by an apprentice training in a law office, and to be a judge by having been a certain number of years at the bar. This, too, served well enough in pioneer America. One of the characteristic virtues of the pioneer was his versatility. He had to be versatile or get off the earth. If something was to be done he must do it himself. Little or no division of labor was possible. Hence the pioneer had something akin to contempt for the expert and the specialist. He believed in eloquent, self-trained lawyers, in fervent, spontaneously called ministers, and in healers made wise by experience. In every connection we are having to learn better. Everywhere the old-time apprentice training is giving way. Everywhere we are having to recognize the importance of training, prep-

aration and science. In the transition from rural, pioneer, agricultural America to the urban, industrial America of today we have become painfully aware of the inadequacy of a rule of thumb administration of justice by apprentice-taught formulas. The decisive importance of an ideal element in the law which our orthodox legal science of the last century ignored has been brought home to us repeatedly by dissents and five to four decisions in cases of the highest social import, in which judicial pictures of society as it should be have served as a sort of super-constitution.

"Thus we are driven to recognize that criticism of such ideals and study of them whereby the subjective ideals of the individual judge may be discriminated from the received ideals which are in very truth a part of the law, is quite as practical as anything which went on in our study and teaching of law in the past.

"In the formative period of our institutions in the last century, the classical seventeenth and eighteenth-century philosophy of law played a leading rôle. In the hands of Marshall and Kent and Story it was a great creative instrument. Creative tasks of no less magnitude are before the lawyer of today

and of tomorrow. He, too, must have and must use philosophy as one of his chief tools. The pioneer in the revival of philosophy of law in America has been doing a service to our social order which I venture to think some day will be reckoned quite comparable to the work of those who laid the foundations of the polity which served us so well in the simpler conditions of the last century."

Roscoe Pound

The Toastmaster

There isn't a thinking lawyer in this country, there isn't a judge who reflects on his task, who hasn't been consciously or unconsciouly or, rather, directly or indirectly impregnated with the contributions of Morris Cohen to jurisprudence. It used to be a cheap gibe to say that a jurist was a man who knows about all law in general but about no law in particular. Morris Cohen himself, to no small degree, has rendered the name of jurist respectable even among lawyers. It had been our hope to have present tonight one of the two or three most significant symbols of the philosophic temper in the legal profession, particularly the philosophic temper in the judge.

The New York Court of Appeals has always been a great court, but never before has it been so conscious of its processes, and consciousness of processes is at least one great test of civilization. Judge Cardozo strikingly illustrates that evil company corrupts good manners; because not only does he read philosophy and refer to philosophers in his opinions, but his whole court is talking philosophy.

You can't do the work of judging reflectively unless you reflect. After all philosophy is not something very different from the systematic pursuit of reflection on man's destiny and man's relation to man. Law embodies to no small degree the expression of man's relation to man. We haven't got Judge Cardozo here to tell us about that and nobody appreciates that better than Judge Mack. Judge Mack has merely a great taste for philosophy, that is, he mingles with philosophers. Whether philosophy can be rubbed off through contact, you will judge by what he shall say to you tonight. In all seriousness, Judge Mack is but one of a number of judges throughout the country who have a deep consciousness that law is not some imposition of will, that law somehow or other must have its final validity in that ordered reason which again I take to be philoso-

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phy. Judge Mack has been good enough to promise a few words in lieu of Judge Cardozo.

Judge Julian W. Mack

My friends, I regret more deeply than any of you that Judge Cardozo isn't here to speak for himself. No man, no judge, unless perhaps it be that other great friend and admirer of Professor Cohen, Justice Holmes, could fittingly take Judge Cardozo's place. I shall not attempt it.

I am, as the Toastmaster said, merely one of the minglers, and it is because there are so many minglers, not philosophers, not his former students but those who love to mingle in his society, that we witness this great outpouring here tonight. We have come to bear testimony to the usefulness of that "useless" life.

Perhaps too, one or two of us—I see one of my own former students here—can say a word of greeting from the West. We founded a School of Law in Chicago in the very year that Cohen began his teaching here, twenty-five years ago, and one of the great lights in that school was that philosopher in the law,

that close friend of Morris Cohen whose greeting you have just listened to, Dean Pound.

I wish that I knew something about philosophy, as Judge Cardozo who ought to be telling you about it does, but no man can mingle with philosophers—and every judge ought to mingle with them—without appreciating, as the Toastmaster said, that philosophy is the basis of the development of law.

Cohen's contributions to legal science you will find in great number in this list of his articles. There are some of us who hoped when he took a leave of absence of a year some five or six years ago that he would carry out the injunction that Justice Holmes laid upon him at that time, to produce not merely the Principles of Science but the great American book on Jurisprudence, that whom none is fitter to produce than he. He failed us in that respect. He proved at that time his uselessness to the law. We trust that in the coming year when he is again to go into the fields for contemplation that he will not be satisfied merely to contemplate but will make posterity his debtor, and not merely posterity but his contemporaries his debtors, by producing both of those books, in good part written—aye, I rather think

completely thought out—and now, many of us trust, to be written in full for the benefit of the law, and for the benefit of all society.

We feel justified at this point in breaking into the continuity of the evening's addresses with a letter, received after the dinner, from

CHIEF JUDGE BENJAMIN N. CARDOZO

MY DEAR MR. GROSSMAN:

I feel a very keen regret that I was prevented by unexpected causes from attending the dinner in honor of Professor Cohen and bearing witness before that great assembly of his friends to my regard and admiration.

I gladly comply with your request to send you a letter which may appear in the printed testimonial as a substitute for the spoken word.

I think I know why you invited me. I am a pseudo-philosopher, and I hope you will believe that I am laying the accent on the pseudo. Any one can be a philosopher if he is willing to incur the odium of that pejorative prefix. The story is told of Lord Westbury that on one occasion he enraged the bishops

by informing them that they had incurred the penalties of a præmunire. When a friend asked him what that exactly meant, he cheerfully replied that he hadn't the least idea. He ought to have tried his hand at philosophy instead of history: the disguise is so much easier. But there are greater examples than Lord Westbury. In his paper "The Myth about Bacon," Professor Cohen observes of the subject of the myth: "No wonder that a real scientist like Harvey was moved to say that Bacon wrote science like a lord Chancellor." That is the way I write philosophy, if it can be called philosophy at all. But then, if I am a pseudo-philosopher, I suppose that Professor Cohen is a pseudo-lawyer, though this time I am placing the emphasis on the lawyer rather than the pseudo. He is a pseudo-lawyer because he has never taken the traditional law school course, and has no license to practice law. That is his only title to what I have called the pejorative prefix. If insight into the essence of the judicial process, if profound appreciation of the fundamental principles and concepts and methods of the law can make a man a lawyer, then Professor Cohen is a lawyer and a great one, though seeing how many lawyers are entered upon the official roll, I think he will do

well to content himself with the title of philosopher.

He is teaching a great lesson, which is sinking more and more into our minds. I went over some of his papers last summer while I was doing some work upon pseudo-philosophic lectures. I was amazed at the range of his erudition alike in law and in philosophy, at the keenness of his perceptions, at the freshness and vigor of his thought, and at the compelling and arresting charm and incisiveness of his literary style. Sooner or later he will articulate his thoughts into a volume, and then his power will be felt in every law school in the land.

I had supposed that the day had gone by when it was necessary to argue for the importance of a philosophy of law. Perhaps some are repelled by what seems to be the pretentious nature of the title. They think a philosophy of law deals with subjects that are complex or unusual or unrelated to life and conduct and the problems of daily practice. The truth is that its subjects are the most simple, the most usual, the most fundamental and important. They are the foundations on which the superstructure must rest, with all the stories yet to be added if it is to rise in symmetry and safety. I thought, as I said, that it was

hardly necessary to preach this doctrine to the lawyers of our day. Its truth is so generally perceived. Yet every now and then, I am surprised to find that there is protest and resistance. Something of the old guild spirit survives. We are a class by ourselves, the priests of the law. We will mind our own preserve. Let the philosophers keep out. Something of this spirit can be traced from time to time in the thought of able lawyers. Last spring, in the course of an opinion on the subject of causation, I ventured to include a citation of Lord Haldane's book "The Reign of Relativity." Lord Haldane, like Lord Bacon, has been both a lord Chancellor and a philosopher, though Professor Cohen will know better than I whether the stigmata of the Chancellor are on the face of his philosophy. Well, I got a letter from a distinguished friend, in which he said that he was greatly shocked that I should have cited such a book in the course of an opinion. He would stand for philosophy, he said, in the philosophical reviews, and for humor in a comic paper, but he did not wish to see humor in an elegy nor philosophy in a legal judgment. Let metaphysics be kept for those to whom physic of that sort is palatable.

Here you have the notion, which reappears again and again and has done so much harm to the law and its development, the notion that law is to be kept in a water-tight compartment and that within that compartment, and no other, is to be found the material by which its growth must be renewed. I can think of no one who has battled against that view more steadily and gallantly than this pseudo-lawyer who has enriched our conception of jurisprudence by the fertilizing waters of a profound and pure philosophy. We shall never get away in education from the study of fundamentals. We shall never get away from it or the need of it in the study of the law. We shall never separate the law from the study of philosophy unless we are ready to condemn it to barrenness and decay. In maintaining the relation between the two spheres of human thought scholars like Professor Cohen are keeping open the road to the steady progress of society along the paths of peace and order.

With high regard and many apologies for my enforced absence, I am,

Faithfully yours,

BENJAMIN N. CARDOZO

Resuming the evening's program:

THE TOASTMASTER

JUDGE MACK's remarks in regard to Cohen's juristic output compel a disclosure. This [referring to the bibliography of Morris Cohen's writings] is not a complete list of Morris Cohen's writings. For some twenty years I have been laboring under the unhappy pricks of conscience of having had certain writings of mine, modest to be sure but nevertheless there they are, appear as mine. I took my law when Morris, as we say, took his philosophy, because he doesn't take it, you see, at all events I took my law when he disagreed with Royce and James and Palmer. In those days I had in the course of duty to review books on law, and they appeared—my reviews appeared —duly over my initials in the pages of the "Harvard Law Review." I now rid myself of the incubus of preening with other people's feathers by telling you that Morris wrote those reviews. I didn't ask him to write them. I simply would put a law book in his hands and say, "Morris, what do you think of that?" and there are those reviews. I give you a warning: I think he will deny the story, but it is true.

I have further reports to make in the form of messages, only a fraction of those that have come,

but I think a few of those you would wish me to read.

Mr. Walter Lippmann writes that he is called out of town as a witness in a case and therefore is not here.

"Paying tribute to Morris Cohen is something I have been doing as long as I can remember. I do not know a more distinguished mind and I do not know a sweeter or more disinterested spirit. Please give him my affectionate greetings.

Sincerely yours,

WALTER LIPPMANN"

Dr. Alvin S. Johnson telegraphs:

"Profound regrets; confined to house; most cordial felicitations to my colleague Morris Cohen, wisest of philosophers and truest of friends."

Professor Kantorowicz cables from Freiburg University:

"Germany honors America's most universal thinker."

The communication from Dr. Finley intimates that when Cohen went over into philosophy he ceased to be a mathematician. A cable from Albert Einstein from Berlin corrects any such suggestion.

"Unvergesslicher Gespräche gedenkend sendet in

Supreme Court of the United States
Washington, D.C. October 3. 1927

My dear Mr. Freeman

Nothing could give me more pleasure than to join as I do in this expression of honor to Professor Cohen. I have read his writings with admiration and great profit. I have enjoyed his conversation with equal profit, affection and esteem. I am proud to be called his friend, & envy his guests who sit at his feet.

Very truly yours
O. W. Holmes

herzlicher Sympathie Glückwünsche. Albert Einstein."

And finally with a bias that perhaps you will forgive I reserved to the last the greatest figure of my own profession, Mr. Justice Holmes. He writes:

"Nothing could give me more pleasure than to join as I do in this expression of honor to Professor Cohen. I have read his writings with admiration and great profit. I have enjoyed his conversation with equal profit, affection and reverence. I am proud that he calls me friend. I envy the youth who sit at his feet.

Very truly yours,

O. W. Holmes."

It is some years since I heard Morris Cohen say —Mr. Russell will forgive the American habit of not sparing a man's modesty, he will forgive me before I get through—I heard Morris Cohen say, "After all, I think Bertrand Russell comes nearest to being my philosophic god." I think since then, Mr. Russell, you have become a little bit more human. Certainly we welcome the happy coincidence, if there be coincidences in the world of philosophy, that enables us to have Mr. Russell here.

Hon. Bertrand Russell

Mr. Toastmaster, Professor Cohen, Ladies and Gentlemen: I am not sure that I have ever had a more embarrassing introduction than given me here tonight and I do not know quite how I am going to attempt to live up to it, so I think I shall have to give that up. I am rather wondering on what ground I have been honored with an invitation to speak on this delightful occasion, because after all most of those who have spoken have known Professor Cohen long and intimately, far more so than I have had the opportunity of doing.

But as I listened to what was said, I seemed to see a glimmer of light as to why I had been invited. We heard that Professor Cohen has a love of minorities. Now that is a taste which I share with him, and I think I love most of the same minorities. There are a good many people very conscious of belonging to minorities who nevertheless belong to what, from some points of view, is a very large minority, but Professor Cohen and I, both, I think, belong to one of the smallest minorities in the world, those, I mean, who have a devotion for mathematical logic. You know if you have been in the habit of preaching

mathematical logic to an inattentive world, it seems like coming out into the blaze of popularity to take up such a cause as Pacifism.

And I have found in Professor Cohen's work the same kind of belief in the virtues of mathematical logic which I have entertained myself, a belief which is perhaps not quite so active in me since that fall which the Toastmaster has spoken of, but which nevertheless still exists. I must suppose that it was in order to represent the smallest of all the minorities to which Professor Cohen belongs, I must suppose that it was for that purpose that I was asked to speak.

I do most entirely agree with the emphasis which in some of his writings he has placed upon what seems to me the sole really scientific approach to philosophic problems, and if there were that alone in his favor, in addition to all the rest that there is, if there were that alone, I, for one, should have been happy to have the opportunity to do him honor.

Now some other questions have been raised tonight upon which I think a careful reading of Professor Cohen's writings will throw some light. The question has been raised whether the Jewish question was real, whether the University of Jerusalem was real,

and it appears that on such matters the philosopher was inclined to throw some doubt. Now I found in Professor Cohen's writings this sentence, "The category of reality belongs not to science but to religion." Therefore you see at once why there can be a dispute as to whether those things are real. It would depend upon your theological outlook whether the University of Jerusalem exists or does not exist. I meditated considerably only today upon that dictum and tried to apply it in various directions, and I considered, for example, that Professor Cohen is a *real* philosopher. That is, I admit, to me a religious conviction, but I was met by this difficulty. I am quite persuaded that the severest canons of science will bring out the same result, and I think perhaps when Professor Cohen rises to reply he will be able to reconcile for me that difficulty which has been troubling my thoughts throughout today and will be able to prove that, scientifically speaking, it is quite doubtful whether he is a philosopher or whether even he exists.

And I am hoping that we may all go away after listening to his concluding remarks not only doubtful whether he exists, but doubtful whether we have been here at all and in the anticipation of that delightful doubt I don't wish to stand any longer be-

tween you and the further speakers who are to follow.

The Toastmaster

I am sure you will agree that I have been a faithful servant of the mandates of the Dinner Committee, but I must make one deviation, I must go off on one little frolic of my own. Particularly tempted by Judge Mack's rather unctuous assumption that he represents the lowest level of philosophic learning, that he is of the humblest class of philosophical untouchedness, we are going to descend lower in the scale. In the presence of Mr. Russell, in view of the explicit reference by Professor Dewey to the devotion to democracy on the part of Morris Cohen, certainly the democratic idea calls for some representation. I think the ignorant layman ought to be represented among our speakers, and I call on Mr. Buckner.

Hon. Emory R. Buckner

Mr. Toastmaster, Professor Cohen and Fellow Guests: I represent the large assemblage here tonight

who have not read the articles which are set forth in Professor Cohen's very vast amount of production here, and yet as I was looking it over a few minutes ago I was somewhat astonished to see the versatility of Morris and realized that I have been overlooking something not so much of a philosophical but a practical nature, which I shall immediately correct.

Let me illustrate: "Interests Served by the Law and the Methods of their Evaluation." As all lawyers will testify one of the most difficult problems we have is trying to fix the value we render clients in fixing the fee. Not only that, but the man has no limits. Now listen to this for next summer at the seashore, "Communal Ghosts and other Perils in Social Philosophy." That must be a mystery story. However, as you go down the page you see at last the Achilles heel there and realize the traditional isolation of the academic career when Professor Cohen has written an article as follows, "Shall the Judges Make the Law?" Well, if Professor Cohen had had the bitter experience that Mr. Marshall and some of the rest of us have often had he would know that that is no longer an open question.

It was twenty years ago last Saturday that I first met Morris Cohen. I was introduced to Morris Cohen

twenty years ago last Saturday, which was my second Saturday in New York, in Childs' Restaurant, where he had been brought to lunch by Felix Frankfurter, whom I had known at Law School. My friendship and acquaintance with Morris has continued ever since. It might have been Thompson's Restaurant, but I think it was Childs' in those good old days of 1907, when the economic implications of the tradition of Childs' Restaurants were still maintained.

From that time on for a number of years Felix and Sam Rosensohn and I had many happy times with Morris Cohen. He never talked philosophy. I had supposed that it was simply a modest aversion to talking shop, and I was pained and somewhat humiliated a number of years later in hearing a mutual friend of ours, who is a judge on the bench and who dabbled a little in philosophy, often speak of philosophic discussions with Morris Cohen. It showed that it wasn't so much that he didn't talk shop but he didn't see that it was worth while to waste any time on Felix Frankfurter, Sam Rosensohn and myself.

I wish to goodness that we had a dictograph on that conversation with Einstein referred to in that cable and could read it tonight. I think it probably

was not only unforgettable but probably equally not understandable.

So I can't join the learned speakers and those who have written concerning Morris Cohen's philosophic achievements, but I can testify to twenty years' history, and I wonder if that isn't the reason why a great many people are here tonight; that however controversial he may be on philosophic subjects so far as the intellect is concerned, he has a large warm human heart, which takes friends and holds them as it has mine for twenty years.

The Toastmaster

Among educational institutions I wonder if, either on the religious or on the scientific basis of reality, Mr. Russell, one would not be justified in saying in the first place that the College of the City of New York *is*, and in the second place that it is the most unique of educational institutions. The reasons are in the minds of most of you, and a unique institution like that, unique for instance in the quality of men that our Law School gets from that institution year by year, must be a unique center of interest to

the head of the institution. I can't imagine a more enticing, a more difficult, a more stimulating task than the headship of the College of the City of New York. Peculiarly, Morris Cohen's life is related to that college. He almost violates American academic tradition in remaining there as long as he has. There he has been; that is his life, that is his spirit, and to a large extent its spirit is his spirit. It is fitting that the new President of that institution should be here tonight—President Robinson.

President Frederick B. Robinson

Mr. Toastmaster, Professor Cohen, Ladies and Gentlemen: It is a good fortune to me to be with you. I had thought earlier in the evening that I might not be here, but by sacrificing some other forms of entertainment I have been able to hear the kindly words and friendly joking of the friends of Professor Morris Cohen. I shall have to leave as soon as I am through speaking, otherwise the lawyers will probably have a case in a Domestic Relations Court, and Mrs. Robinson, whom I have deserted temporarily, will indeed be in an embarrassing posi-

tion, that is temporarily. And those of you who know her know that no one favored as I am would stay away longer than necessary.

The evening seems to have gone pretty much in the direction of philosophy and the philosopher has been represented as one who is canny enough not to commit himself on very serious questions. Mr. Russell has probably overlooked the fact and will be glad to be reminded that on that basis the greatest American philosopher today is Calvin Coolidge.

I was attending an educational gathering in Washington and the President of the host institution arranged for us to visit President Coolidge. The President shook hands with each one of us in swift succession. We then went out on the lawn (because after that cordial greeting we all felt that there should be some memento of such an occasion) to have our photograph taken with the President in the center. As we stood there before a camera, the camera man, in accordance with the traditions of his art, took his time getting the lens ready and beckoned one here and beckoned one there; and as we stood waiting not a word was being said. The silence soon got past human endurance, and our host said by way of conversation and profound remark, "Why, Mr.

President, this is very much like New England weather." The President, with that philosophical calm and precision which marks all master minds, paused for a moment and reflected and then he said, "Well, I don't know." You see I have been in close contact with philosophy as found today. It is therefore with some equipment that I appear at this board, otherwise I should have felt entirely unprepared.

But seriously speaking, and as the President of the College which I believe is the greatest force for democracy, equality, freedom and the advancement of man in America and possibly in the world, I am happy to come here to say something about it and its relation to Professor Cohen, their influence one upon the other and the consequences which must inevitably follow, be they philosophical or otherwise.

Professor Cohen was born in Minsk, Russia, in 1880 and was brought to this country as a boy, and here in this great democracy, in this one land on all the earth in which we have approached as nearly as possible the solution of how to give the individual freedom of opportunity and free play so far as it is compatible with equal opportunity to all others, he became part of a student body that is cared for by the

great heart and the deep philosophy of America. He was graduated by the College of the City of New York, and his intellectual foundations, like my own and those of other graduates of the College who are here, were laid in the College of the City of New York—in an institution pledged to the American ideal; and it is somewhat about that American ideal that I would say just a word as a possible contribution to this meeting tonight.

America has over 23,000,000 children in the public schools supported out of the public treasury. America has over 4,000,000 students in the high schools supported out of the common funds. America has over a million students in universities, colleges and technical schools. There has been no other nation on the face of the earth that has recognized so clearly the importance of the education of a free people. The two things go together, freedom and education. The one without the other would be impossible. In our country we give each man control of his own property, grant him personal freedom, and allow him all the essentials which make for individual responsibility, but all these benefits would constitute a mere mockery of liberty were it not for the fact that we provided the basis for the best

use of opportunity through the education of the individual.

And we, Professor Cohen, you and I, and Dr. Pollitzer whom I see, and all our other good friends here, in all professions, represent the product of America's hope put into practice, and it is for that reason that we have each to give back a great deal not only to America but to the world.

Above all schools and, indeed, most things that are physical, on the earth and made by man, I honor the College of the City of New York and we are fortunate to have had part of our training, our contact with human beings there.

Now the next thoughts that come to my mind are thoughts concerning the work of a professor in such a college, and second the opportunity peculiar to one who has the high privilege of teaching the philosophy of the law to the undergraduates of such an American, democratic institution as that. A professor in an American college is somewhat different from the professor in the European university. He has before him not those students who have gone through a rigorous gymnasium of Germany or public school of England and who are ripe for post-graduate work and independent thought; he is deal-

ing with a mixed body of adolescents that is being shaped. To teach these immature students it is well that we have with us men such as the one described by Mr. Buckner, men of mellowness and friendship, men of kindliness and human sympathy. It is not so much the information which our professors give to the boys, although that is important, but what youth wants is the human contact. It is the sweet mellowness of maturity guiding and controlling the impetuosity of youth.

Never before in this country or in the world have there been times when immature youth was assailed with more disturbing influences, things that shock and throw out of balance all that were sacred to his people, sacred to his nation, sacred to his very life in the community, than are abroad in the world and in America today. It is for that reason that at this time we want men profound enough and kind enough and tactful enough to take these boys gently in hand and guide them in directions that are wholesome and good and not permit them to be tossed on the waves of skepticism and doubt and even led into immature acts and commitments which do not seem at all proper and which they will renounce

and be ashamed of or reject in their maturity.

For this reason I believe it is well for us to have professors who will instil ideals of loyalty and devotion, ideals of gratitude for sacrifice, national, state and parental, in their behalf and who will bend all their efforts to strengthening the young mind so that at the time when it takes its part in world affairs it may do so as a free spirit in the world of men, unafraid of anything and not bent and warped before it was ready to play its own part as dictated by its own mature will.

Professor Cohen, you and all the members of our faculty are peculiarly privileged in the College of the City of New York to exert this guiding influence. Sometimes we find youth is rash in its aggressiveness on certain points. A young man gets a new idea. He finds somebody does not agree with him and at the expense of all other things insists upon pushing his own idea home. It is then, at that time, that we want the kindly guiding influence of men of the character described by your friend, Mr. Buckner, and in that we are fortunate.

I am reminded of Professor Sill's little poem, The Fool's Prayer, where he said:

"These clumsy feet still in the mire
Go crushing blossoms without end.
These hard, well-meaning hands we thrust
Within the heartstrings of a friend.
The ill-timed truth we might have kept,
Who knows how sharp it pierced and stung?
The word we had not sense to say,
Who knows how grandly it had rung?"

Oh, that is a profound philosophy of maturity, the philosophy which puts above minor points and details, harmonious and kindly principles of human love, and the American college professor has as his function that very thing.

Our College is fortunate in having that type of man. In the philosophy of law there is a remarkable opportunity. I am not a lawyer, and it is evident that I am not a philosopher. This much I do know, that no one can pursue speculation concerning law even superficially without reaching one truth, and no one can pursue philosophy of law too profoundly to escape this truth, that the foundation principle of law is loyalty. Without loyalty there can be no law, because loyalty implies the dedication of an individual to a great principle. It implies that the individual will bow before that which is established as the controlling law of the community, and it is for

that reason that we welcome a philosopher dealing with the philosophy of the law in order that the students may realize that law means the subordination of individual whims and fancies and caprices to that which grows out of the wishes of the whole people, whether it be the common law or those laws which are written in statutes. For these reasons I say that it is a fine thing to have a ripe, well-trained student of law and one devoted to democratic principles to be teaching in the College of the City of New York. We have all dedicated ourselves to a high calling. There is no calling that I can conceive that would equal that of being part of the special agency of a great and free people to pass on to the youth of the day the riches of the past and the best thought of the present.

Professor Cohen is now on a leave of absence in order to restore his health. We are happy that he should have his leave. We look forward to a good use of it and a return in good health and spirit and many years of loyal, fine devotion to the students, to the College and to the United States of America, the greatest nation that has ever combined idealism with practice for the good of those of all climes who come to our shores.

THE TOASTMASTER

THE committee will forgive me if I regard the song that was to have been sung at this moment as having been sung. We lawyers have adopted the wise precaution of sometimes regarding done what should have been done. I now call on Mr. Grossman, and may I just give an encore of the rather important remark that among mere men there is a limit to time?

MAX GROSSMAN

WE have been very fortunate in having a portrait painted of Professor Cohen by a very gifted artist, Joseph Margulies, who unfortunately at the present time cannot be with us. I know that he would have been very happy to be with us on this occasion. The difficulty of philosophy in knowing whether one is real can sometimes be solved by a photograph or a portrait, like the taking of a ghost's picture. We want to make the reality more than of tonight and we want it for all future students of the College. We are therefore very happy that the Trustees of the College have unanimously agreed to accept and have

authorized our beloved Professor Overstreet, head of the Department of Philosophy, to receive for the College the portrait of our teacher, Professor Cohen.

The Toastmaster

The head of a department is usually a nuisance because he wants to organize ideas and ideas are very untractable. Professor Overstreet is not that kind of head of a department. Professor Overstreet.

Professor Harry Allen Overstreet

Mr. Toastmaster, Morris—you see how quickly he responds to me? Some of you, perhaps, do not know that I am his boss. You don't know how very obedient he is. The time is very late; you are very patient; and I am going to do my little stunt very quickly. I am to receive this portrait of Morris. Before I do that, however, I cannot help but voice a certain disappointment. You may remember early in the evening that Professor Woodbridge gave a warning. He said, "Look out, Morris—unless someone says something nasty about you, you will join the immortals." Now I may be mistaken, but I don't think that any-

body has said anything nasty about Morris this evening. Apparently, then, it is up to me. I don't know how I am going to tell you the nasty things that I should like to tell. It will be very hard. Perhaps I had better put the thing indirectly. I shall simply ask you to sympathize with me.

Just think of it. I am his superior—or I am supposed to be—and I have had to live with him. I have had to live with this person who is—just what is he? He is a hypermathematician, and a hypermathematical logician. That is bad enough, isn't it? But then he is also a hypermathematical metaphysician. And just on the side, he is a jurisprudential philosopher and a philosopher of the whole of civilization. But, what is worst of all, he has an easy—an almost infuriatingly easy—way of hobnobbing with Einsteins and Bertrand Russells and so on. He writes friendly letters to Justice Holmes and gets friendly letters in response. Now think of the awfulness of meeting that infernal, superhuman creature coming down the hall! I have done it for fifteen years, and I still survive to tell the tale. Am I superior or am I not?

Now I want you, if you will, to look at the picture; and then I am sure you will almost weep tears

of sympathy for me. I want you to analyze that picture with great—what shall I say?—not with artistic care but with psychologic penetration.

Start with the dome. Do you see the dome? If you were to see that dome coming down the corridor, looming up in the distance, coming towards you, stopping to talk with you, and were to try to put something across to that dome that wasn't just what the dome liked, if you were to try to say something and didn't quite know what you were talking about, as sometimes happens with college professors, I ask you—can you imagine what would come out of that dome? Many, many a time have I gone down in utter humiliation before that awful dome.

Now come down from the dome. Look at the eyes. They are awful eyes. They look a little bit out of the corners—you know the way. You don't know whether they are going suddenly to flash right straight at you. If ever you have felt a panic when eyes looked at you first from the corners and then straight—well, you will know what I feel. I have had to stand those eyes.

Then come down to the lips. Do you note the curious curve on the lips? I don't know how many

have heard Professor Cohen speak? Those of you who have will remember what happens when the curve begins to curve. Shall I call it humor? Irony? Sarcasm? Shall I call it whimsical penetration? Put them all together and you have Cohen's lips.

Now come down from the lips to that jaw. See the jaw? It isn't a bulldog jaw. You can meet a bulldog jaw. You can punch it good and hard. But this isn't a bull-dog jaw; nor is it the absence of a jaw either. It is one of those perfectly devastating wedge-shaped jaws. When that wedge-shaped jaw gets—well, somewhere into your anatomy—beware!

Now come down from the jaw. Look at that left hand, planted solidly over that book. I don't know of anything more symbolic than that. He has it all! No need of saying anything. But now look at that right hand—with the finger. It is a masterpiece. Did you ever sit in Morris's class and see that finger come down? You thought that you had said something very brilliant. You were very much puffed up about it. You even looked around at your fellows for admiration. And then the finger came down. And when that finger came down you melted away. That finger, with its point on the point—that is Cohen. And I

have had to live with that finger for fifteen years. I have been the boss and he has been the underling. Picture the sorrows of such a superior!

I just want, however, to say one word about Morris. I don't think it has been said to-night. I think that in that picture there is not just one person. There are many persons. At least I can detect three persons there all rolled up in one. I wonder if you can guess who those three persons are. When I first met Morris Cohen fifteen years ago in my office and had to decide whether or not I should keep him in my department, I no sooner looked at him than I said: "Spinoza." He is Spinoza, is he not? Now look again at the picture: Who else is there? See the sharp features, the ironic penetration, the touch of amused iconoclasm. Voltaire, is not that true? Now look again. Unfortunately, the picture does not easily show who the third character is, because it would need to display a very snubby nose, protruding eyes, and—well, Morris is thin and this gentleman was a little on the *embonpoint*. Socrates? I think if you should roll Spinoza, Voltaire and Socrates into one you would have Morris Cohen.

But there is still another thing to be said about

him. I think if you get to his fundamental character, you will find that he is a Jew of the Jews. He has the fine Hebraic tradition in his make-up. He has the sense of justice and the courage to fight for justice. Yes, he is a Jew. But he is also something more. He has the fine intellectual clarity of the Greek, has he not?—and that fine passion for scientific truth for which we honor the Greek. So I think we have here a Jew and a Hellene in our City College: Spinoza, Voltaire, Socrates, Jew and Greek all rolled up in one. And that is the great person you see in that picture.

Now may I simply say for my own department that we are greatly proud of Morris Cohen. We hope that some means of preventing a too early old-age will soon be discovered and that Morris Cohen will have many more twenty-five year celebrations. The department is proud of him; the College of the City of New York is proud of him; and I am very proud myself that by order of the Board of Trustees I am permitted to accept for the College this portrait given through the generosity of the hosts of devoted admirers of our philosopher and very dear friend.

The Toastmaster

Like Professor Overstreet, except more so, I too have lived with Morris Cohen; so, like Professor Overstreet, I too am an exhibit in endurance. However, I think Professor Woodbridge would feel that the admonition he threw out had been satisfied, the hints of imperfections have been sufficiently plain, for me to feel not derelict in my duty if I say no more than that tonight at least the philosopher has become king—Professor Morris Cohen.

Professor Morris R. Cohen

Friends, I should be less human than even philosophers are supposed to be if I were not deeply stirred by this tribute tonight. President Robinson has informed you that I am on a leave of absence because of poor health. Not being a politician I do not know how to shake many hands without getting tired; and having seen so many friends tonight, and having shaken so many hands cordially, I am very tired. Lest, in my confusion, I fail to make my point, let me say that I wish to thank you each and all. If

there is any one here tonight whose hand I have not shaken in friendship, I do so now in spirit with the assurance of my deepest gratitude.

It is very gratifying to receive the homage of men so deservedly eminent as those who have spoken here tonight. In this I include Margold and Grossman, whose real eminence and distinction time will surely make visible to those who cannot see it now. I may say in passing, that not only I, but everyone here tonight, has reason to be grateful for the vision, energy, and unconquerable tact and sweetness with which Max Grossman has conceived and carried through this meeting.

It is gratifying to hear kind words from my dear colleague and beloved "boss" Overstreet, who never lets our differences of philosophic opinion mar our mutual affection and esteem, and from my revered masters in philosophy, Woodbridge, Dewey and Russell. Dewey's "Psychology" was my first text book in philosophy, and Woodbridge's Seminar in Aristotle was my first academic course. It is true, as has been intimated here tonight, that when Mr. Bertrand Russell published his "Principles of Mathematics," he became my Allah; and I can say that Mohammed has

kept the faith even though Allah himself has perhaps somewhat departed from it.

It is gratifying to have this tribute paid me in the presence of Mr. Louis Marshall, under whose auspices I began my teaching career, in association with Thomas Davidson in the Educational Alliance. I was a senior in College and the thirty-six lectures on History which I then delivered formed a major part of my education.

It is good that my children are present tonight and will hereafter know that I have other claims to fame than that which the daily newspapers have so far accorded me on their front pages, namely, as the father of Felix S. Cohen. It is most gratifying to have my father and mother present, just as they are preparing to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of their wedding. I was what is called today a problem child, backward in mind and body. The neighbors all called me Kallyeleh, which was the local Yiddish for a low grade moron, and I did not have the wit to resent it. Fortunately for me, my mother was too poor and busy or too sensible ever to send me to psychoanalysts, or other psychopaths; and so I managed to get into College and I have managed to stay there. Tonight is

Succoth, the harvest feast; and I know at least two brave hearts that are gathering the fruits of parental faith. I am fortunate also in the presence of my devoted wife, and of friends like Felix Frankfurter and Arthur Meyer, whose faith kept me alive during dark and weary years when I walked through the valley of humiliation.

To a sensitive mind no human joy can be without its drop of regret. The Jewish ritual provides for the commemoration of the dead at all festivals. Permit me therefore to mention Thomas Davidson, William T. Harris, and Mrs. Ruutz-Rees, who enriched my youth, and favored pupils like Louis Gollomb, Alvin Bruch, and Jack Devinsky, who have passed to the great beyond.

Most gratifying of all, because of more than personal significance, is the fact that this tribute comes from students to a teacher who has at all times tried to tell them what he thought they ought to hear, rather than what he thought they would like to hear. This strengthens my faith in human nature and in the effort to teach the truth at a time when such faith needs strengthening. There is a great deal of talk today about psychologic methods of teaching, of putting your ideas "over," and "selling" them to the

public. I have not the time and energy to find out how much real value there is in all this talk. But I am profoundly convinced that there is no royal road up the rocky and dangerous steep of philosophy—not even for King Demos. Students must do the climbing themselves and suffer scratches or worse injuries in the process. The only help that a teacher can offer is to follow the Socratic method and convince his students that they must climb the Hill of Vision or else sink in the mire of conventional error. The best he can do to make the journey more easy is to relieve the student of needless traditional baggage. To convince young people of logical error, that the reasons for their opinions are not well founded, is not an easy nor, in the conventional sense, a pleasant occupation. It is much pleasanter to preach one's own convictions. But, if liberal civilization has any value, the logical manner in which we arrive at and hold our belief is of the utmost importance; and the philosophic teacher, as distinct from the preacher, must stress the supreme importance of weighing evidence and admitting our ignorance when we do not know. Without the critical spirit, doctrines readily become restraints rather than aids in the search for truth. The critical and scientific spirit can

be trained in philosophy as it is trained in the special sciences. This, at any rate, has been the dominant idea so far as I have ideas as to the teaching of philosophy. It exposes me to the charge of being merely critical or negative, or destructive. I am willing to plead guilty to this charge. I am willing to take my pupils out of the Egypt of Bondage into the Desert of Freedom and leave them there. I have faith that they will enter the promised land without me. Though I am liberally skeptical I have profound faith that if you remove certain obstructions, the free mind will thrive by its own energy on the natural food which it can gather in its own experience. It is this faith which you have strengthened tonight.

And now having said what I could not possibly prevent myself from saying, I ought perhaps to sit down. The hour is late and I cannot hope to add to the wit and wisdom with which you have been so richly regaled tonight. But it would not be characteristic of the man whom you honor tonight if he spoke without contradicting anybody. You might not recognize him as Morris R. Cohen. Just now I have in fact the irresistible temptation to contradict some of the enthusiastic things said about me tonight—not only unintentionally by the manner or substance of what

I am saying—but deliberately. For many years I have taken upon myself the duty of acting as the devil's advocate, of arguing against hasty canonization of doctrines or persons. All the habits of my past life, therefore, urge me to speak out and give reasons why Morris R. Cohen should not be canonized or beatified—at least not yet.

Please do not misunderstand me. I am not anxious to be suspected of modesty. In the days of my impudent youth I coined a beatitude which I still find of some use: "Blessed are they who are not modest; they shall not need any devices to call attention to themselves and to their modesty." It is not fear that any of the eulogistic remarks will spoil me, but regard for truth that urges me to act as devil's advocate. It is not, for instance, true that I have taught philosophy for twenty-five years. Officially, it is only fifteen years. The other years were in the Department of Mathematics and about that the absolute silence tonight is an expression of extremest charity. I must say, however, that if it had not been for the more-than-human kindness of Professor Sim, whose memory will ever be green in my heart, I doubt whether I could have held my place; and I am glad that his successor, my good friend Profes-

sor Saurel, one of the best disciplined minds in the College, does not have me as a difficulty on his hands.

Two things however, keep me from the ungracious rôle of acting as devil's advocate after the sanctification or beatification has been pronounced. The first is an incident in the life of the philosopher, David Hume. One day his servant burst into his room and breathlessly exclaimed "Oh, Master, Oh, Master, they have named our street Saint David's Street!" "Oh, never you mind," said that genial philosopher, "many a better man than I has been sainted before his death."

The other and more important reason is that I do not want to sit down without paying tribute to two noble ladies in whose steadfast service my life has acquired the merit which brings you here tonight. I mean, of course, my Alma Mater, the College of the City of New York, and the divine mistress of my soul, Philosophy.

It is fortunately not necessary before a City College gathering like this to call attention to the historic significance of a great city like New York opening the opportunity of higher education to all its children, the sons of black and white, foreign and

native born, Jews and Gentiles. Let me however, pay my personal tribute. The City College has nurtured and sustained me through the major part of my life. It gave me a sound college education in science at a time when I could not possibly have obtained it elsewhere, and it has given me a chance to teach pupils who make teaching stimulating and delightful. I am rather skeptical about racial and cultural generalizations; but no one can deny that the students of our College are peculiarly open-minded as well as critical. They are prepared to weigh and consider new as well as old ideas, and their intellectual eagerness is encouraged rather than restrained by home conditions.

I confess that I have often been tempted to desert the business of teaching undergraduates. For one thing, the bridle of Theages, poor health, makes the noise and bustle of the city almost intolerable to me. I am constantly solicited, internally or externally, to write on this or that, and I cannot do it without an amount of quiet which the city cannot afford. But when I think of the eager responsiveness of City College students, and when I recall the unusual opportunities which I have had to become acquainted with the home background of my students and that

of their parents, I can never get myself to leave them permanently.

But, loyal as I am to the College, I must admit a rival to it in my affections, and that is, the study of philosophy. I shall never be a monist, for there is no monism in my heart. I am attached to philosophy by many roots of my being. My interest in the philosophy of religion dates back to my early boyhood when I used to walk with my grandfather on Saturday afternoons on the Causeway of the Radzwill Palace and he used to talk to me about Maimonides, and the Book of Cusari. My interest in the philosophy of law has its roots in the fact that the substance of my very first education was Mosaic and Talmudic legislation. But I took the scientific course at College, tried to teach mathematics for many years, and the relation of science to philosophy has become to me an habitual source of worry. As a young man, ardently devoted to the Socialist movement, the dialectics of Marx and Hegel stirred my mind and convinced me that the roots of social philosophy cannot be understood without it. The years of association with Felix Adler, which it has been my privilege to enjoy, have made the ethical approach to philosophy very real to me.

The diversity of my philosophic interests has been the object of some very kind allusions here tonight and on other occasions, but to me it has often appeared as one of the regrettable causes of my inability so far to do adequate work along any one line. I might have overcome this temptation to scatter my energies if I had not early in my life been struck by a great dream—a dream which I got by contagion from Thomas Davidson. Davidson was a man of wide erudition and his great enthusiasms stirred me to my depths. The enthusiasm which influenced me most was the dream of an Encyclopedia of Philosophy that should do for the culture of the 20th century what the Brothers of Sincerity did for the 10th, and Diderot and d'Alembert did for the 18th. I do not know that I shall ever be able to do anything practical to realize that dream. But it has dominated my whole intellectual life because everything that I read somehow or other gets fitted into that scheme. Yet I cannot free myself from a certain natural human ambition to elaborate my ideas in a form sufficient to indicate their importance rather than in the fragmentary manner that has been possible for me so far under the conditions of undergraduate teaching.

The rivalry between philosophy and college teaching is not only in regard to the apportioning of time and physical energy. There is also a difference of intellectual attitude. In studying or in philosophic writing, one follows the subject matter only. In teaching beginners one must efface one's own special interests and enter into the difficulties which beset the student.

I confess that I have not solved the conflict in my own heart. Nor have I much faith in easy solutions. According to the principle of polarity which has been the leading idea in all my own philosophic synthesis, difficulties are inherent in all existence. The best that I have been able to do both for philosophy and for college teaching is to concentrate on what may seem the most menial service of philosophy, its function as a logical disinfectant. I cannot in the few weeks that I meet my students hope to build up a coherent world-view that shall endure throughout their subsequent life. Even if I had the time, respect for the individual personality of the student before me would keep me from trying to impose my own world-view on those whose temperament, tastes, and experience are different from mine. But I may try to develop a spirit of inquiry and intellectual freedom, a spirit of distrust for that which is merely plausible,

a spirit of genuine regard for the weight of evidence. Surely it is good for a great democracy that its citizens shall constantly ask their governors to give a rational account of their stewardship, that men and women shall demand that new proposals as well as the established institutions should defend themselves before the bar of reason.

I know that this faith in reason is not popular today. Not the Olympian Gods of the air and sunlight but the chthonic or underground deities prevail today. The dark soil rather than the sunlight is most often invoked to explain growth. Though science is a word to conjure with, the terms rational and intellectual are means of opprobrium. But what reason is there to doubt that blind impulse and unenlightened passion may lead us as others to irreparable ruin? Never before have those absorbed in the producing of material things had so much power in the governance of human life. It is true that our great captains of industry and finance must perforce also manage men. But their ultimate criterion is the very simple one of monetary profit. Can the ultimate interests of human life be safely left to be governed by that simple consideration? This is itself a question of philosophy and we need to develop the question-

ing mind before we can hope for any satisfactory answer. Mature philosophy tells no fortunes. It has no panaceas or nostrums to sell. But it can clear our minds for an honest consideration of the problems before us.

However, even in the merely logical or mathematical field, philosophy is not only a technique but also a vision. It is not merely instrumental or a useful means to something else. It is also an end in itself, like music, the vision of beauty, or communing with those we love. How indeed does the life of man differ from that of the beast except by the possession of a few great ideas which open a window on the great seas of eternal being? Logic may not fathom the depths but it may train us to look fearlessly into the abyss which surrounds us.

Such is the view of philosophy which has actuated my teaching, and your kindness tonight has strengthened my faith in it. Again I thank you, and conclude with the hope that my increased strength may promote the common good.

Supplement

It would be a pleasant task to print all the tributes to Professor Cohen, that have been received on the occasion of the public testimonial, but the limits of this book would have to be stretched considerably. We have therefore culled some succinct expressions that are representative of many.

Probably nothing spoken during the dinner or written in appreciation of Professor Cohen will produce such pardonable pride in him as the essays in appreciation by a few of the younger students included in this supplement, Dr. Sidney Hook, Ernest Nagel, Robert I. Wolff and Paul Weiss.

Letters

Peterborough, N. H.
September 18, 1927

My dear Mr. Grossman:

It will give me great pleasure—and in saying that, I really mean something,—to serve as a sponsor for the Dinner to be given to Dr. Morris Cohen on October 15th, and I thank you for giving me this opportunity to show my great regard for him.

Yours sincerely,
Edwin Arlington Robinson

University of California,
September 26, 1927

My dear Sir:

I am delighted to learn that Professor Cohen's admirers are planning a celebration in his honor. By his penetrating analytical thinking, his wide and at the same time profound interest in many fields, and his unremitting championship of the higher intellectual values, he has established for himself a position that is well-nigh unique among our philo-

sophical writers. I shall be glad to be numbered among the members of your Honorary Committee and only regret that geographical reasons obviously make attendance impossible.

Very truly yours,

Robert H. Lowie

October 3, 1927

Dear Mr. Grossman:

I very much regret that absence from New York will prevent me from being present at the testimonial dinner to Professor Morris R. Cohen. His modesty and the character of his work and influence have stood in the way of that wider recognition of his contribution to the thought of our time which he so amply deserves. And I am delighted to know that by this dinner the friends and former students of Professor Cohen will have an opportunity to express something of the gratitude they feel for his life and work, and, may I add, for his trenchant occasional comments upon current events.

Yours very truly,

Bruno Lasker

University of London,
October 6, 1927

My dear Sir:

I am very glad to know that his former students intend to honor Professor Morris Cohen by a dinner to commemorate his twenty-five years of University teaching.

I not only have grateful and happy memories of what I have learnt from his writings and his friendship, but I know that among the philosophical minds of America since William James' death, no one has done work more penetrating or more creative. In honoring him you honor yourselves.

Yours very truly,
H. J. Laski

October 12, 1927

My dear Mr. Grossman:

I have been hoping I might be able to come to the dinner to Professor Cohen; but to my great regret, I find that it will be impossible to postpone other matters that must come first. I am the more sorry to be away because I was a classmate of Dr. Cohen's; and I wish I could testify in person to the honor he

has conferred upon our Class of 1900 by being its most distinguished member.

Minds as courageous as his, aflame with the passion for truth, and capable of the hard labor needed to make the explorations, are none too abundant. Our college is fortunate in having trained him and then called him to inspire those who in their day will do it credit.

The group which first proposed this dinner deserves well for giving Dr. Cohen's friends this chance to express their esteem.

Sincerely yours,

HENRY NEUMANN

October 15, 1927

MY DEAR MR. GROSSMAN:

It is a great disappointment to me not to be able to attend the dinner in honor of my dear friend, Professor Cohen. For this occasion is one of rejoicing not only for his students of twenty-five years at the College, but fully as much for the large body of his friends who grew up with him and knew him as a student. We, who had this good fortune, have anticipated the great service which Professor Cohen has rendered not only to the College but to the

whole country. He has taught very widely respect for the truth, for clear thinking, for high standards of conduct, and he has done all this always with good humor and without raising controversy or bad feeling. It is a great lesson to the City of New York that the life and work of Professor Cohen are appreciated and celebrated by so distinguished a group as I know you will have.

Cordially yours,

Louis I. Dublin

Telegram, October 15, 1927

Deeply regret my inability to join in the tribute being paid to Professor Morris Cohen tonight. I have watched with sincere pride the steady accomplishment of my classmate, as gifted teacher, learned author, and one of the greatest philosophers of our time; may our Alma Mater enjoy his splendid influence for many more years.

Alfred Frankenthaler

Essays

PROFESSOR MORRIS R. COHEN AS TEACHER

By Dr. Sidney Hook, '23

No one can say he fully knows Morris R. Cohen who has not sat many months in his class as an eager and hardworking student. For although mere scholastic contact with him meant intellectual contagion, the true dimensions of his power were most evident to those who followed along the paths he opened up and were thus in a position to appreciate his mastery of the many vistas which those paths commanded.

In my time Professor Cohen was the strongest intellectual force in the college. His full strength was felt primarily by the students and through them reflected upon the faculty. One instructor was wont to remark that he could always pick out Cohen's students. They were distinguished by an intensity about ideas, by a catholicity of interests and by a keenness and persistency in logical analysis which often outran the limits of social discretion. This absorption in

method was really the "mark of Cohen" which they bore in their manner if not on their brow. Sometimes they were not popular with other members of the faculty—they stressed the importance of giving reasons, raised doubts, challenged time-worn dogmas, interrupted the full-flowing periods of rotund rhetoric and were deaf to all arguments from authority. For they had been trained by the Socratic method.

Professor Cohen has always insisted that he is essentially a student of logic. However that may be, his courses (no matter whether their catalogue caption was civilization, law or science) were actually courses in *applied* logic. The only ethics he impressed upon his students were the ethics of the logical conscience. That was all of his faith he knowingly let his students see.

His procedure in the class-room was not only instructive, it was exhilarating. His manner was direct; his expression incisive; his passionate clarity set off by a sense of humor which enlivened the most intricate analyses. But to watch the bright blue rapier of his dialectic leaping, parrying and thrusting in the animated give and take of class discussion, to sense his unerring instinct for logical form and his devotion to its austere beauties, to cleave through a knotty

tissue of irrelevances and see eye to eye with him into the heart of a problem, was an experience both inspiring and chastening. True, it was sometimes painful to be transfixed by a contradiction or impaled on the horns of a dilemma; but it was a bleeding quite salutory for the soul. It cleared the vision, quickened one's sensibilities, humbled and strengthened the heart.

The range and thoroughness of his knowledge was remarkable. "Encyclopedic" is not the proper word, for the information in an encyclopedia stands outside a context. But Professor Cohen's erudition was astonishing and impressive just because it always came into evidence in a proper and compelling context. Although his erudition sat lightly upon him, no man made more effective use of it. He would puncture the most plausible generalizations with the citation of apposite instances. He who disapproved of excessive preoccupation with historical studies knew more history than its professional representatives. He was always ready to quote chapter and verse. But his vast knowledge made him cautious. He was ever ready to show that we were most certain about things we knew least about. And yet so profound was his intellectual humility that I can truthfully assert that

I have heard him say "I do not know" more often than any other person I have known. Like Socrates he taught that the realization of one's ignorance was the beginning of one's wisdom.

Professor Cohen ofttimes declared that none of his students were aware of what he really believed. If that were so, it would be strange indeed. The very power of analysis which he had helped refine within us enabled us to discover, if not all the articles of his philosophic faith, at least some of the cardinal ones. He who taught us to reason made us see that reason was not all-powerful or sufficient. He who questioned all intuitions believed that finer insight and more inclusive vision was the goal of philosophic study. He denied all monisms—and emphasized a productive and democratic plurality of principles. He was impatient of all attempts to explain away multi-dimensionalities in nature. He tried to see things in perspective and rejected a temporalism and psychologism which shut its eyes to the compelling qualities of invariance and objectivity in the universe. He was an Aristotelian who took his point of departure from the equations of mathematical physics rather than from the individual organism of biology. Metaphysics he regarded as the most exalted

discipline the human mind can pursue and he brought home to his students a "realizing sense" of the purport of philosophical problems in relation to the most vital concerns of their daily life.

Comparatively few of Professor Cohen's students in my days got to know the man. They were a little overawed—timidly worshipful at a distance—fearful of taking his time. But those who approached him found a quick sympathy for their genuine problems, a friendliness which was sincere and a generosity in outlook and action which eloquently revealed, despite his casual and absent-minded air, his deep sensitiveness to the feelings and sufferings of fellow beings. Although he does not believe in Man, Morris R. Cohen is a lover of men.

He never foisted his opinions and beliefs upon any one—even upon those who sought his advice in their need and uncertainty. He was always ready to patiently examine the *implications* of any proposed course, to suggest *alternatives* and discuss the possible consequences of our ambitions and plans, but he never urged a choice upon us. He was neither priest nor crusader—wanted neither disciples nor converts. Invariably he closed the discussion with an "either —or."

Personally I owe Professor Cohen my interest in logical method and my faith in its efficacy; some of the foundation stones of my philosophic outlook and the store of materials without which philosophic construction is so much "airy masonry." His encouragement and criticism helped me to find myself, helped me to solve important problems whose outcome was momentous for the course and tenor of my present life. He has been for me—and I know for many others as well—a clear light of reason in these dark days of passion, almost the ideal embodiment of the philosophic life, of the *good* life.

APPRECIATION

By Ernest Nagel, '23

In an attempt to describe the scope of the interests of Leibniz, Fontenelle once likened him to an ancient charioteer, driving, not eight horses yoked side by side, but all the sciences at once. Those who have known Professor Cohen will not fail to discover that his own very great admiration for the German philosopher has achieved the not unusual result of imprinting upon him the character of his ideal. But only those who are fortunate to have been his stu-

dents, to have met him almost daily for many, many weeks, will know the peculiar effectiveness of his scholastic accomplishments, the contagious vigor of his mind, and the stimulus to intellectual integrity which he has provided.

It is indeed upon integrity in one's beliefs that Professor Cohen still insists as the one cardinal virtue of the philosophic life. No student of his who was worth his salt failed to acquire it in some measure. We learned from him what grasp of subject-matter, what comprehensiveness of range, may contribute to the stature of a man. But we learned, above all, love of honesty and clarity in one's convictions, and humility in the presence of truth, to be the basis of the life of reason. His class-room methods were the expression of his passionate rationality. Ours was the joy in watching the play and penetration of a first-rate mind; and ours too was the pain which his ruthless logic, stooping for no personalities and recognizing no compulsion but that of the subject-matter, inflicted upon our vanities. He taught us, so that some of us will never forget it, that suspended judgments are achievements of intense reflection, not of indolence, and that doctrinal loyalties are not incompatible with catholicity in one's sympathies and

understandings. How many neglected, because badly defended or unpopular, points of view did we come to know! He was the defender of the intellectual under-dog.

Professor Cohen used to remark that his ideals of teaching permitted him no opportunity to fill our minds with his own "prejudices." When therefore Professor Cohen lectured to us, we understood his physical strength was not equal to the Socratic task he had set himself. During these lapses from his usual manner, and from informal conversations and his many published articles, we acquired the elements of a positive doctrine. It would be lacking completely the light of humor which never failed him, to try to tell here what this was. But, although it is dangerous to consign a thinker to a label, Professor Cohen has been, ever since we knew him, a Platonic naturalist. He made many of us take for our own his pious attachment to nature as the source of our being, and accept the methods of the physical sciences as fruitful sources for a metaphysics. To be docile to the lessons of experience, but withal to seek blessedness in the shadow of the ideal, has been the substance of his teachings.

Toward the defenders of obscurantism, of in-

tolerance, of brute power, Morris R. Cohen has been a bitter foe. He has been a radical all his life in the only genuine sense of the word radicalism—eager to follow wherever the argument may lead. He has his tenderer moments, however. Always an unsparing critic, who would never repeat words to tickle the ears of his hearers, to those who dared to penetrate the outer shell he made evident his fine insights into personal problems. Is it any wonder, then, that many of us have been irrational in our attachment to him? As the priestess Diotema taught that beauty of body, the haunting anticipation of beauties incomparably superior, often leads to an idolatry of the former, so we, who have been taught to prize the majesty of the intellectual life, have found in Morris R. Cohen the living symbol of our ideal.

A TRIBUTE FROM A STUDENT OF PHYSICS

By Robert I. Wolff, '24

It is the characteristic mark of Professor Cohen's influence that in addition to "Logic" and the "Philosophy of Science" I studied with him "Ancient Philos-

ophy" and the "Philosophy of Civilization." For I took the first two because I was a student of physics, and the others because his astounding versatility was a continual stimulus to increase the range of my own knowledge. The titles of the books which covered the walls of his room, and of those which piled high on three sides of his desk, made a veritable citadel of knowledge from within which he surveyed the scene, bearing witness to the diversity of subjects he had mastered. In class discussion his most frequent criticism—lightning quick and sharp—was that we were ignorant of the facts. His lesson was plain—knowing, we should be prepared to present evidence; not knowing, we should freely say so.

Professor Cohen always extolled the Socratic method, but was rarely in a position to practice it. His classes frequently overflowed to the window-sills; visitors were common. In such cases he lectured perforce. The students hung on his words, and took notes.

But in the advanced work (particularly in the "Philosophy of Science") classes were small and the professor dealt with them in an informal way which made the students feel at ease. Tentative conclusions were advanced with freedom. Professor Cohen

sought to draw us out. Indeed on several occasions we were his guests at home, where he thought to stimulate a freer flow of ideas.

I regard it as fortunate that my first course with Professor Cohen was "Logic." His interest in logic was the key to his versatility. For he regarded as his province all subjects illuminated by the light of reason. His first reference in the course brought to light a source of his own inspiration—Peirce's essay on the "Fixation of Belief." Peirce's name was the first of a long series with which he made us familiar.

Students of science at the college will always be most indebted to him for the course on the "Philosophy of Science." Here the critical bent of his mind came most to the fore. His intimate knowledge of physical and mathematical science served to interpret and illustrate the work of Poincaré, which we read together, in those many places where our own information was incomplete. In the end we possessed a fund of knowledge and a critical attitude that proved a guide in further study. Thereafter we could feel that no discipline however recondite was not amenable to the powers of our reason;—with Professor Cohen as example we had also the courage to attack and master any.

A TEACHER OF PHILOSOPHERS

By Paul Weiss, '27

The study of philosophy is a fruitless, meaningless pursuit without the philosophic passion. It is possible to read books and study issues, accept positions and discourse learnedly without true understanding. To be a philosopher one must have the attitude, not simply information—even about philosophy.

Morris Raphael Cohen is a teacher of philosophers, not of philosophies. He recognizes the difference between wisdom and knowledge. He refuses to spread gospel so that he may breed thinkers, sees behind the ritual of pedagogy to its purpose and is willing to sacrifice disciples for the sake of future philosophic brothers.

He teaches philosophy by example. With him, dialectic illuminates the fact that thinking is a pleasure, and an end in itself. His erudition reveals unsuspected vistas. His intellectual honesty furthers an appreciation for truth, irrespective of where it may be found and where it may lead. The enthusiasm of his students for philosophy reflects his passion for this maligned of modern studies.

He asks a simple question. The answers are skilfully analyzed until all the implications are revealed. Issues are stripped of confusing details and stand out clearly in their essential character. Science, history, religion, literature, mathematics—the entire field of man's knowledge—are employed to expose the full meaning of a question. Every situation is taken on its merits; no solution is urged because it fits in with an acknowledged system. It is the meaning of the problem that is of importance—prejudice, authority, "common sense" and the text-book are all made to give way before it.

There is no Cohen school; there are no Cohenians. Few of his former students accept his position and few of his present students know what it is. Those who have answered his questions in terms of his own views have often been surprised to find that these were not acceptable. They forgot that it was not answers but understanding that was desired. Cohen is a philosopher even in his analysis of remarks about his own philosophy.

The Promise Of The Prophets

Dr. John H. Finley in his greeting to Professor Cohen mentioned certain letters that he wished he could recover and put on record. He wrote, "I have never read higher commendation of any student from such high authority. You have fulfilled the promise of these great prophets."

It is therefore with keen pleasure that we print as part of this record three of the letters that have been found.

The letters are dated 1906, 1907, and 1908. The years were not of the brightest in Morris Cohen's life. They were years of weariness of spirit, part of the "dark and weary years when he walked in the valley of humiliation." But in retrospect all the years are but a preparation and this tribute comes to him to gladden his days of serenity.

The "promise of the prophets" has been fulfilled. The high praise from the teachers of Morris R. Cohen with which we conclude this volume are prophetic shadows of the many beautiful things

spoken and written of him. Teacher and student of Professor Cohen thus greet each other over the span of years, and link the past and the present in the life of one individual. He serves as hostage, a promise of the recurrent beauty of life in its phases of simplicity and wisdom.

Harvard University.
Dec. 5, 1906.

President Finley:

Dear Sir:—

Dr. Morris R. Cohen writes me that he is an applicant for a position in Philosophy in your college. I want to recommend him as strongly as I possibly can. He is a man whom I should be glad to add to our Harvard Staff had we the money—a deep and wide scholar, a lucid expositor, one whom others quickly honor and follow, and a man of singularly beautiful, generous, and influential character. It is seldom that the apostolic traits are so combined with the scholarly. No one can be with him an hour without loving and learning. It must be an extraordinary

man who could wisely be preferred to him as a teacher of Philosophy.

Very truly yours,

G. H. PALMER

103 Irving Street
Cambridge, Mass.
Jan. 6, 1907.

Morris R. Cohen, Ph.D.,

MY DEAR COHEN:—

You are at liberty to make use of this letter as the expression of my hearty recommendation of you as a candidate for a position in the Department of Philosophy at the College of the City of New York.

I know you as an advanced graduate student, as a member of my Seminaries, as a leader in the organization of the Ethical Society at Harvard, as a writer of your thesis for the Harvard Ph.D. degree, and as a successful candidate for that degree. In all these capacities you have shown yourself a man of real power, of scholarship, of originality, of philosophical promise, and of sound attainments.

You are sure to make a good teacher of the subject. You ought to get a good place in philosophy. I expect to see you make a decided success in our common profession.

Yours very truly

JOSIAH ROYCE.

Professor of History of Philosophy, Harvard.

May 14, 1908.

I hereby certify that I have known Dr. Morris R. Cohen for a number of years and have watched his progress in the study of philosophy which he began under Mr. Thomas Davidson more than ten years ago. I consider him very careful and accurate in his studies and what is better in philosophy, I think that he has a real insight into the deeper and more productive systems of philosophy. He seems to me to be adding substantial things from year to year, and I should regard his influence upon College Students in this subject as stimulating and healthful.

WILLIAM T. HARRIS

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

THERE were many details in arranging for the Dinner and for the publication of the addresses, and it would have been very difficult to carry on, were it not for the exceedingly kind help of many friends and committee members. To mention by name all to whom thanks are due would be a gracious and pleasant task, but we must be chary of space and cognizant of the occasion; yet I would be very ungrateful were I to omit the many sincere thanks due for the unstinted help of the "Executive Committee" second to none in devoted coöperation: Henry Auerbach, Alexander L. Eolis, Herman A. Gray, Daniel G. Krane, Isidor Lazarus and Jacob Schapiro.

MAX GROSSMAN,
Executive Secretary.

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